

# **MEDIA RELEASE**

## **III Marine Expeditionary Force**

---

From: Lt. Col. Stuart Fugler  
Director, Public Affairs  
III Marine Expeditionary Force

Phone: 098-970-3841  
E-mail: [IIIMEFPAO@usmc.mil](mailto:IIIMEFPAO@usmc.mil)  
Web site: <http://www.iiimef.marines.mil/>

---

Release number: 16-025

Date: December 19, 2016

### **MV-22 Ospreys in Japan continue flight operations**

**MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP BUTLER, Okinawa, Japan** – MV-22 Ospreys with 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, III Marine Expeditionary Force will continue flight operations today.

"We have conducted a thorough, careful and exhaustive review of MV-22 aviation safety procedures and briefed Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials," said U.S. Forces, Japan Commander Lt. Gen Jerry P. Martinez. "While the investigation is ongoing, we are highly confident in our assessment that the cause of the mishap was due solely to the aircraft's rotor blades coming into contact with the refueling line. We greatly appreciate the strong support from our Alliance partner in the aftermath of this incident."

U.S. Forces, Japan began notification of continued flight operations to the Government of Japan on Friday and concluded with a final briefing this morning. Lt. Gen Lawrence D. Nicholson, the Commanding General of III Marine Expeditionary Force, made notifications to the Okinawa Prefectural Government and Okinawa Defense Bureau.

"After a thorough and careful review of our safety procedures, checklists, and aircraft, I am highly confident that we can continue safe flight operations of the MV-22 in support of our Alliance partner and obligations," said Nicholson. "It is very important for Japanese citizens to understand and share our utmost confidence in the safety and reliability of the MV-22, or we would not continue flight operations. It is equally important that we ensure our pilots have every opportunity to conduct training, which allows us to remain proficient, and enable us to respond when most needed in support of the Alliance."

Media may contact the III Marine Expeditionary Force public affairs office at the provided contact information.